

GOVERNOR JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM

Friday, April 6, 2007

This is Governor Jennifer Granholm.

This week, I've been working the phones and talking to business leaders from across the country about all the things that make Michigan a great place for them to invest and grow. It's the same sales pitch I gave businesses last month during my jobs mission to Germany when a number of companies announced they are investing \$20 million to create and retain over 700 Michigan jobs.

First, and most important, I tell all the business leaders I talk to that the quality of Michigan's workforce is second to none. And, we're making the right investments in education and worker training to keep up with the demands of the new economy.

Second, I tell those prospective CEOs about our 21st Century Jobs Fund, which is diversifying our economy and encouraging growth in industries like alternative energy, life sciences and homeland security. These are all sectors that create good-paying jobs and that benefit from Michigan's manufacturing infrastructure

Third, I tell CEOs that my administration is aggressively leveraging tax incentives so that we create jobs and spur private investments. And, I'm fighting to make our taxes highly competitive and keep our rates below the national average.

These selling points have helped push companies like Google, Whirlpool and United Solar Ovonic to create thousands of jobs in Michigan – and more companies will follow if we work this plan.

While I'm selling companies on Michigan, I'm also encouraging job training to help Michigan companies maintain jobs, stay competitive and flourish right here.

This week I announced that at Grand Rapids Community College, workers from Tubelite, Vi-Chem and Wolverine Coil Spring – to name a few – will receive training as part of our Manufacturing Competitiveness Program.

And we are doing the same thing at community colleges across the state. In total, the training across Michigan is helping improve the skills of over 3,500 workers at 60 Michigan companies.

Worker training and retraining for new skills allows our manufacturers to stay competitive in the global economy, which in turn helps to strengthen Michigan's economy. At the same time, our highly-skilled and adaptable workforce is critical to attracting jobs and investments to Michigan.

But even as we work to pitch Michigan to new companies and to train our workers, the financial crisis that we are facing remains our most urgent challenge, and it's blocking us from implementing many of the steps of our comprehensive economic plan.

No CEO wants to commit to a state that cannot get its fiscal house in order. And, no business can afford to make investments in a place where education, public safety and health care risk being gutted by deep cuts.

I'm working with all sides in Lansing right now on the fight for Michigan jobs, and to put our state on solid financial footing. Because for Michigan to be competitive it is critical that we make the tough choices to cut where we can, reform government, and invest in our people and our future.

Thank you for listening